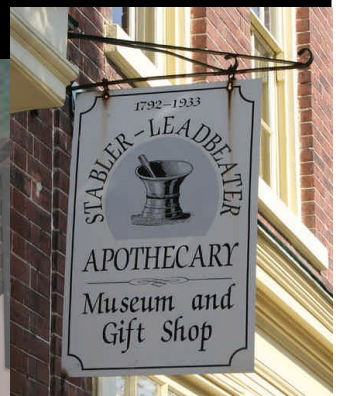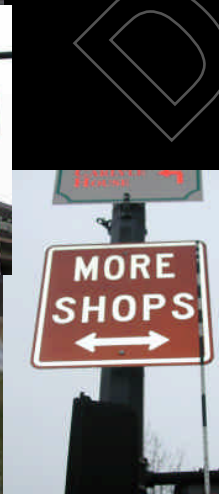# ALEXANDRIA

## WAYFINDING PROGRAM

Stakeholder Advisory Group Final Meeting

June 30 2010

**Tonight's Agenda**

**Acknowledgements**

**Mockups Debrief (55 minutes)**
- Intro: photo tour of mockups with BAR, SAG, Public Comment Summary
- City Working Group/Sasaki proposed resolutions to comments
- Around the room -- Individual SAG Member comments on mockups and proposed resolutions
- Public comments on mockups and proposed resolutions

**Final Comments from SAG Members (45 minutes)**
- Are you supportive of the overall proposed Wayfinding program?
- Is the program consistent with the objectives established by the SAG?
- Are there aspects of the program that you do not support, and if so, why?

**Public Comment (10 minutes)**

CITY OF **ALEXANDRIA**
WAYFINDING DESIGN

**BAR Comments:**
**Very nice-looking, well proportioned for the amount of open space at this specific site**.
**"Alexandria" on both the monument-style sign and the emblem is redundant. Eliminate the**
**"Alexandria" text on the emblem in this instance.**
**Difficult to see the date on the emblem; improve legibility on emblem or add to brick portion**.

**SAG comments:**
Location is good. Would prefer, "Welcome to the City of Alexandria". **Size using the current**
**wording should be smaller in length than shown**
Include names/logos/symbols of our four Sister Cities on the monument signs (subsequent commenter
disagreed)

**Public Comments**
**Established date should be more legible**
Consider applying a larger seal. The oversized seal on the South Gateway sign is stunning.
**Sign is quite large, needs to be more in scale with the current sign**; too big given the low speed limit in
that area.
**Should be smaller scale**. Although the color scheme is pleasant, it's just too overwhelming.
Suggest selling bricks or plaque as memorial to help fund Gateway.
Lacking finesse – would prefer simple, elegant, classic, and " befitting ". convey the depth of history

# Mock-ups Evaluation: Gateway – South End

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WAYFINDING DESIGN

**BAR Comments**

Could be improved by adding more definition, such as plantings or a more horizontal element, such as a broader brick base/plinth to anchor the sign and soften the "lollipop" look. Another suggestion was to surround the circular City emblem within a frame.

**SAG Comments**

I drove past this twice without realizing this was the gateway marker. I disagree with BAR that having a raised planter bed would improve this sign, it's the upper portion of the sign combined with placement in the median that fails to attract attention away from glimpses of the Potomac. Compared to the northern gateway sign, this sign fails to announce the city limit.

On the South, the scale works, but hard to make out the ship until very close. On the backside, granted this is mock up cardboard, but it does emphasize that it very much diminishes the parkway view when leaving Alexandria. Therefore, the backside warrants some effort, because it cannot be left as just a big piece of whatever, that is too disrespectful of the Parkway.

**Public Comments**

An ideal entry sign for this and similar portals to the city. Really like the oversized city seal. Ensure "established" date is legible.

The oversized seal on the South Gateway sign is stunning

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# Mock-ups Eval: Vehicular Directional King Street

**BAR**

- Sign is too big - people drive slowly on King because of traffic. Sign height and width should be reduced by approximately 30% on 66' wide streets and suggested reducing the number of messages, and/or using 2 ½ inch tall letters.
- Better balance pedestrian scale with vehicular signage needs, the Design Guidelines should recommend sign sizes in proportion to the street and sidewalk widths.
- "Old Town" at the top of the sign does not have enough contrast with the background and fades away.
- Difficult to read "City of Alexandria" at bottom of sign as well as noting that is superfluous on signs in this location.
- Consider treatment of the back of these signs. A lighter color might make the sign recede in lieu of the existing dark, overbearing color.

**SAG**

- Trees obstructed the view of the sign. That shouldn't happen too often.
- I have no problem with the size of this sign since it must compete with shop signs, trees and regulatory signs. I have no doubt that visitors will appreciate the size of this sign more than residents ever will.

**Public**

- Signs along King Street are too high and too large
- Too large - At that scale, signage is a visual distraction from surroundings. Signs at a scale that could help guide both pedestrians and vehicles, similar to the blue signs in DC, seem more appropriate to an in-town setting.
- Sign seemed large and out of place on King Street. difficult to read from a car due to its placement behind trees. King Street signs need to respect the scale of the neighborhood. Signs should be placed closer to intersections or other locations where they can more easily be read without being blocked by tree branches.
- "City of" and "Est. 1749" difficult to read on most signs. A larger "Alexandria" label would be clearer and more functional than including redundant text on every sign.

# Mock-ups: Vehicular Directional -Washington

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# Mock-ups: Vehicular Directional -Washington

**BAR Comments**

- Most Board members believed that the DR1 is perfect, proportional and works well with the scale of the multi-lane wide roadway. One member felt it was still too large and the DR2 might be more appropriate on the Parkway
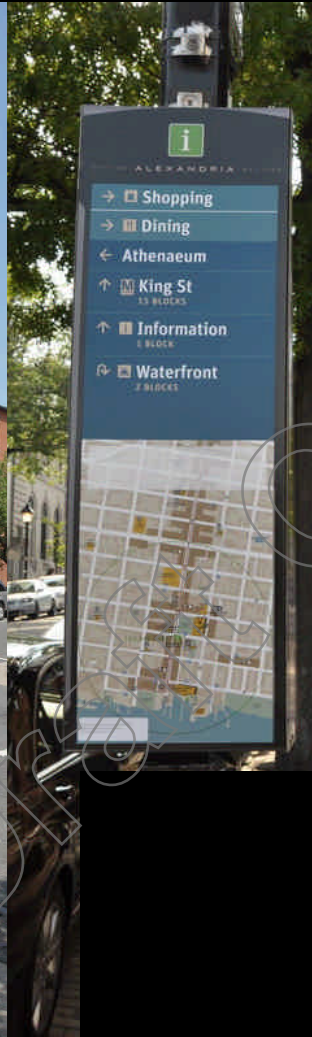
**SAG Comments**

- Again, a sign I drove past and missed.

**Public Comments**

- The second sign at the web site directs traffic to Carlyle West on Duke Street from traffic going North on Washington Street. This is confusing. There is also a very popular Historic Property in Alexandria which is the Carlyle House. I think this will only confuse those who are seeking the carlyle House.

- This sign had the right scale and legibility for drivers on Washington Street. Would be a welcome addition to the streetscape--an attractive and clear way to direct motorists through the city.

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**BAR Comments**

- Terrific, great and outstanding.
- Consider reducing the number based on the need for information at an intersection.
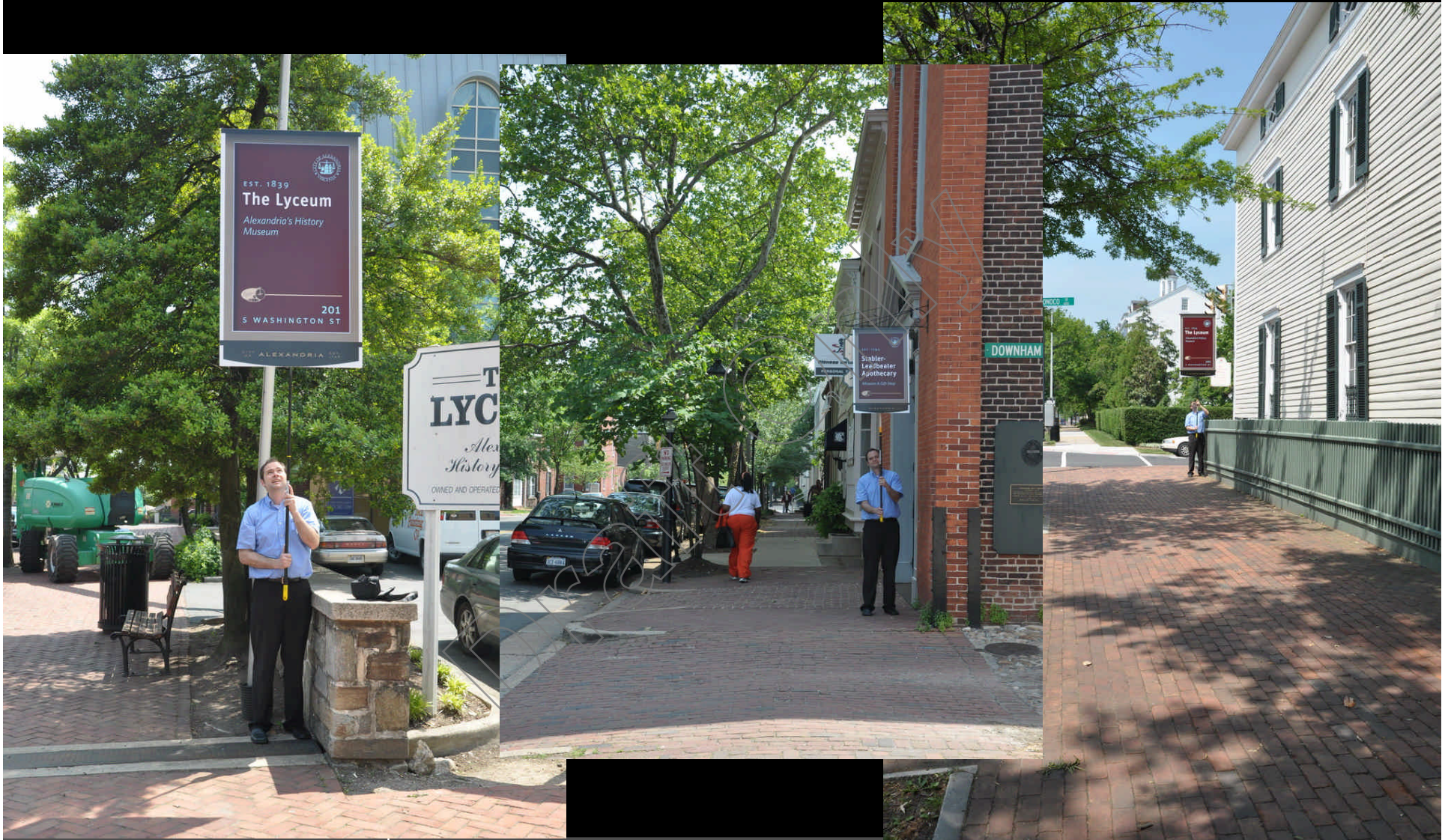- Colors on the map need more contrast.

**SAG Comments**

- Because the 'information icon' is placed at the top of this sign, I found it too subtle. The 'information icon' should be bolder on pedestrian signs. I'm 5'5" tall so I needed to either craned my head back for or stand back away from all the pedestrians signs.
- Visitors liked the sign; they said it was clean & uncluttered. They also liked not having to refer to a paper map. (They also liked the A-frame signs.)

**Public Comments**

- I think that the curved U-turn-looking arrow on the pedestrian kiosks is confusing in trying to direct people to the Waterfront and Metro. I think it should be a down arrow instead.
- Really liked these. Thought it had the right mix of interpretive and directional information. Glad that these were not overly cluttered with specific (and quickly dated) information about local businesses. Would be handy for visitors to have these all along King Street. Liked the dual placement kitty-corner from each other at two of the four corners of King and Lee.

# Mock-ups: Destination ID Signs

**BAR**

- These signs are trying to provide information at both a vehicular and pedestrian may, therefore, not be successful at either.
- Most members agreed that interpretive information about the site should not be put on these signs but instead provided via a cell phone tour or inside the building.
- Increase size of letters to emphasize the destination and remove extraneous information (no smoking and accessibility symbols, description of site, address, etc…).  Most agreed that it is useful to have a site's hours posted.
- One person mentioned that the need for the accessibility symbol should be confirmed with the Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities.
- Like the three color schemes for civic, historic, parks.
- Existing Lyceum sign is much easier to read  (Staff confirmed that the existing sign does not comply with the Washington St. sign guidelines because it is a freestanding sign).
- The Board members suggested that the existing museum signs be removed and that the Wayfinding signs be used throughout to provide immediate identification as a public facility.

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# Mock-ups Evaluation Parking Signs

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## WAYFINDING DESIGN

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# Mock-ups Evaluation Parking Signs

BAR
- Blue on trailblazer sign should coordinate/match blue on the City standard street sign.
- Size and information provided is appropriate.
- The Boards understood that a Certificate of Appropriateness would be required for commercial text on parking garage signs and that staff would return with this application in June, 2010.
- Keep parking sign colors consistent on all garages throughout the City.

SAG Comments
- Perfect sign, right down to the contrasting shades of blue. I could easily see it from King Street
- I like the mast arm mounted sign better.

Public Comments
- A nice improvement over the existing hodgepodge of parking signs. Attractive, simple, straight forward.  Seems we should try to limit the placement of these signs on lampposts, however.  They are much more appropriate on traffic signal mast arms.

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
WAYFINDING DESIGN

9 July 2010

# Mock-ups Evaluation General Comments

**Positive**
- Overall, the BAR members **commended the program and how it has evolved, very** pleased with what they have seen so far.
- I fully support everything I am seeing at this time for the signage.
- think the " idea " of a **standardized system across the city has merit**,  especially to at unify the major signage for primary "corridors
- Overall, the broad program It is **getting simpler, and less busy and cluttered, which is good**
- Looks good. I don't have any concerns. I like the pages focusing on  accessibility requirements/elements and the citation of sources.
- Signage around the **city would benefit from a unified "brand", both for aesthetic reasons and to help people navigate**. I also think that the styles created by the design team are clear, legible, and suit the city's image.
- Overall, I was pleased at how good they looked.
- The proposed sign fonts are very **readable and legible**.
- I found all the signs **legible and appropriate size/scale**
- Color: palates are neighborhood dependent but this shade blue is fitting for OT and need not 'match' the blue street ID signs.
- Location: Mast arm and corner placements are better in that they don't conflict with trees.
- I'm pleasantly surprised about how well the scale fits into King Street. They blend in nicely on the street. The coordinated design makes the old signs look even worse!
- This all looks great – Looks to me like you and the SAG have everything well under control and nearing the finish line!

**Negative or suggestions for improvement**
- **Some sign types are too numerous**.
- **Some types of signs may be unnecessary**, or at least warrant heavy editing....(content and/or number of signs).
- **Some sign types are way too large**,  we have emphasized smaller pedestrian, (walking) oriented signage , where appropriate, and larger, car oriented signage where appropriate.... it is important to make that distinction.....to evaluate locations as to what are the purposes...and what should be the resultant size, frequency, and location(s).
- City should contact disability (physical, blind, deaf, etc.) service agencies to get their **feedback on the accessibility** aspects of the new signage? They (& the people they serve) are the experts on what does (& does not work) in terms of accessibility.
- If Old Town is to survive we must get motorist out of their cars  sooner rather than later.  So having directional signs for the historic features within Old Town  geared towards motorists is a contradiction.  **The signs on the main approach streets should be geared towards directing motorists to the nearest garages and the directional signs for sightseeing geared to pedestrian**.

# Mock-ups Evaluation Specific/Other Comments

**BAR**

- **Existing A-frames are "pretty trashy"** -- not convinced that the proposed uniform design and stricter fabrication guidelines will result in better signs. Need to nail down who will monitor the condition of the signs over time.
- Where multiple sizes of a sign type are approved, some form of **Design Guideline overview is needed** to insure that the proper size (smallest functional) sign is used at each site.
- The circulation map is difficult to read in the Design Guidelines Manual.
- The thermometer style map on the current blue and white pedestrian orientation signs on King Street is very easy to read to determine one's location in on King.
- The entire West End should not be grouped together.
- The text on the district headers can be difficult to read in some places.
- **Torpedo Factory** needs to have more directional signage than currently exists.

**Public**

- Explore ideas for how to **integrate some online options into the signs**.
- Looks great - My only suggestion would be to **include a web address on each sign for more information**. Over time, this could be used to indicate maps to parking lots with availability, more details on historic sites or walking directions from a smartphone. Each sign could have its own address or it could be general. Good luck with this initiative.
- The **sandwich boards have been very successful** for small business in Old Town. I believe that actual logos of business is really important, an annual fee for the marketing opportunity would be in the best interest of the city and the business.
- The "gateway" signs into Old Town should also indicate, in a more dramatic fashion, **speed limits** and the fact that motorists are entering a pedestrian dominant area and not another sprawling suburb and must adjust their driving style accordingly.

**Revisions for discussion based on comments received**

➢ Improve legibility of emblem text, esp. founding date
➢ Reduce size of the northern gateway, highlight founding date
➢ Reduce size of the King St. Vehicular signs
• Reduce size of the Washington St. Vehicular Signs (?)
• Punch up the visibility of the parking trailblazers
• Resolve the lollipop style southern gateway
• Re-format the destination ID signs to improve legibility, reduce size(?)

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WAYFINDING DESIGN

Emblem Mock-up May 2010

Revised – "City of" and "est 1749" lightened

CITY OF **ALEXANDRIA**
WAYFINDING DESIGN
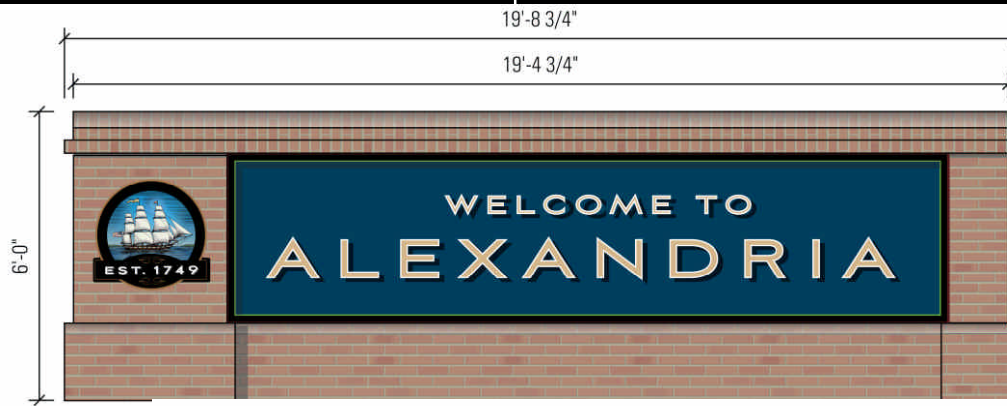
Emblem Mock-up May 2010



1749 in larger more visible font

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
WAYFINDING DESIGN

Size of the May 2010 mockup, showing revised emblem to highlight established date

Optional smaller size (15x4'9"), showing revised emblem to highlight established date

19'-8 3/4"
19'-4 3/4"
6'-0"

**WELCOME TO ALEXANDRIA**
EST. 1749

Size of the May 2010 mockup, showing revised emblem to highlight established date

15'-0"
4'-9"

**WELCOME TO ALEXANDRIA**
EST. 1749

Optional smaller size (15x4'9"), showing revised emblem to highlight established date

11'-0"
6'-0"

National Park Service preferred size

Proposed size reduction of King Street Signs
From 4'6 x 5'6"
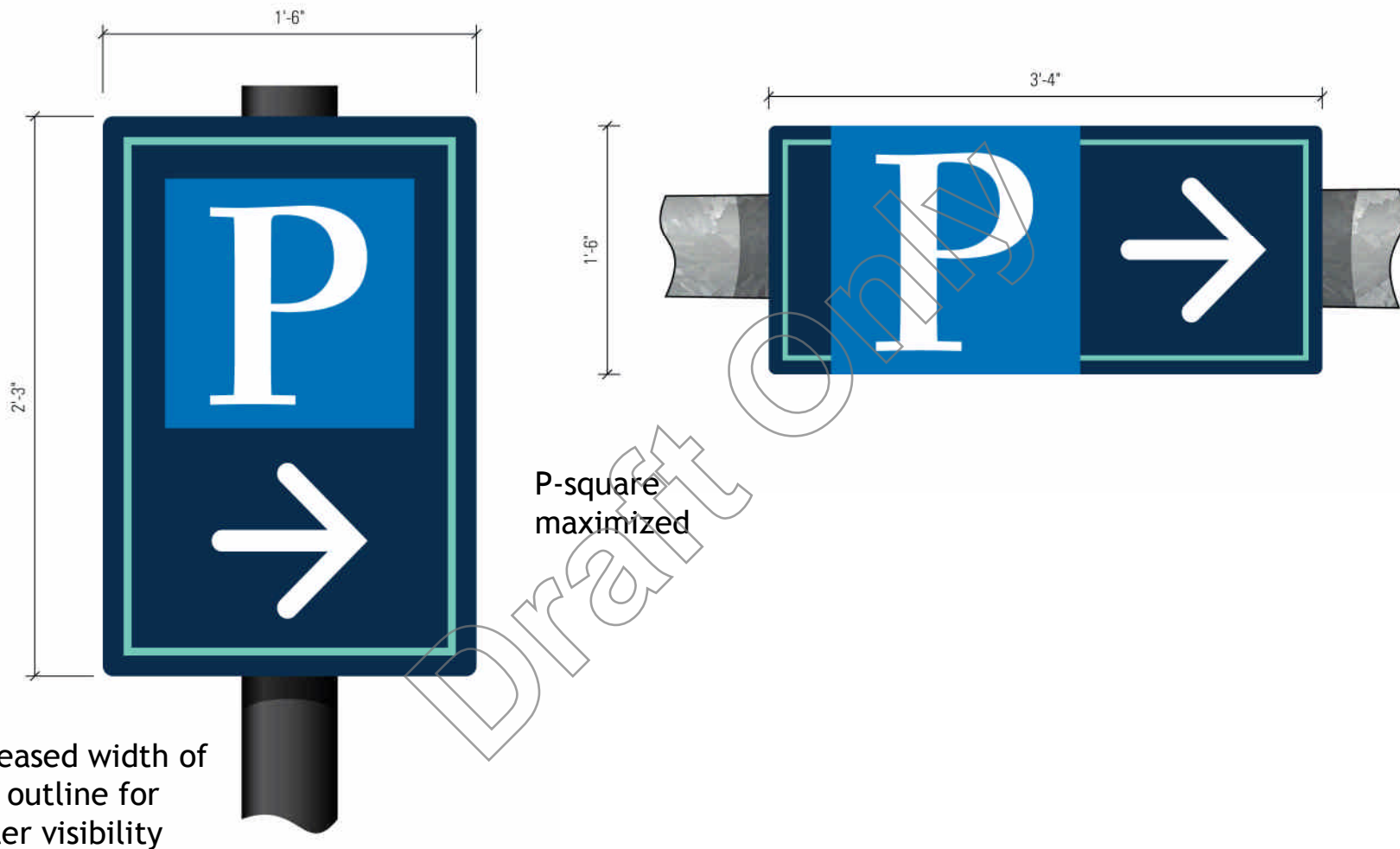To 3'10 x 4'10"
Max 4 messages
Keep font size at 3.5"

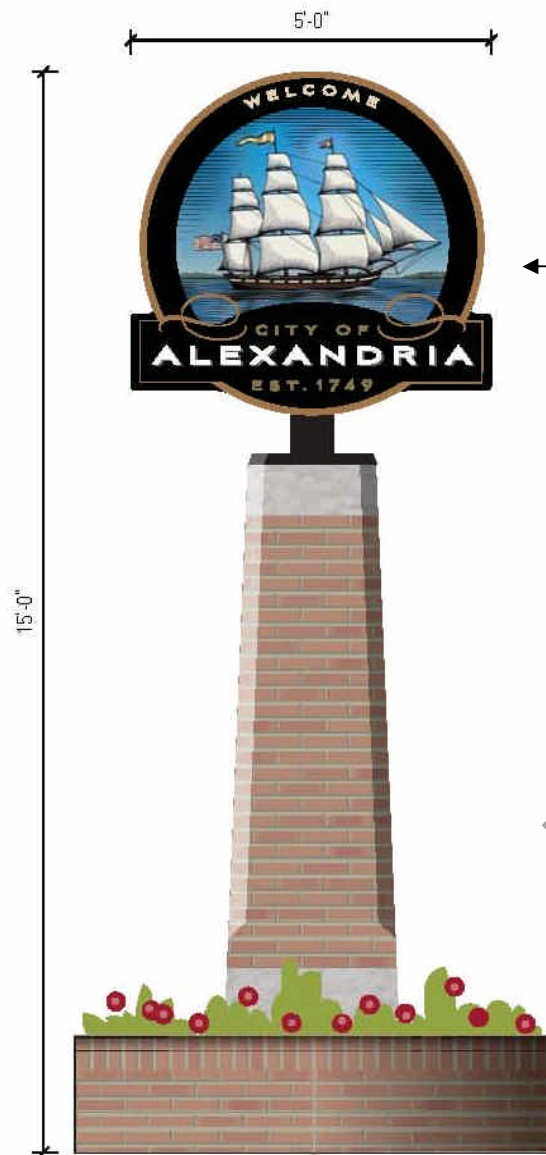King Street Signs showing size reduction

1'-6"

2'-3"

P-square
maximized

Increased width of
teal outline for
better visibility

3'-4"

1'-6"

Draft Only

5'-0"

WELCOME

CITY OF
**ALEXANDRIA**
EST. 1749

15'-0"

May 2010 Mockup

5'-0"

WELCOME

CITY OF
**ALEXANDRIA**
1749

improved legibility
of established date

more substantial
connection between
brick and emblem to
resolve "lollipop" feel

14'-9"

Draft Only

**Revisions:**
- Date optional
- Heritage Trail seal optional
- Several standard sizes of text to accommodate different message lengths (larger than prior versions)
- Address removed
- Large sign shortened by 7 inches (now 3'3"x4'6")
- Small sign is same size as prior version (2'x3'), but with enlarged text; this could potentially be post mounted or hung shingle style

28          C

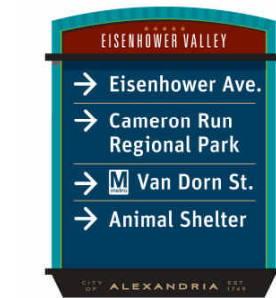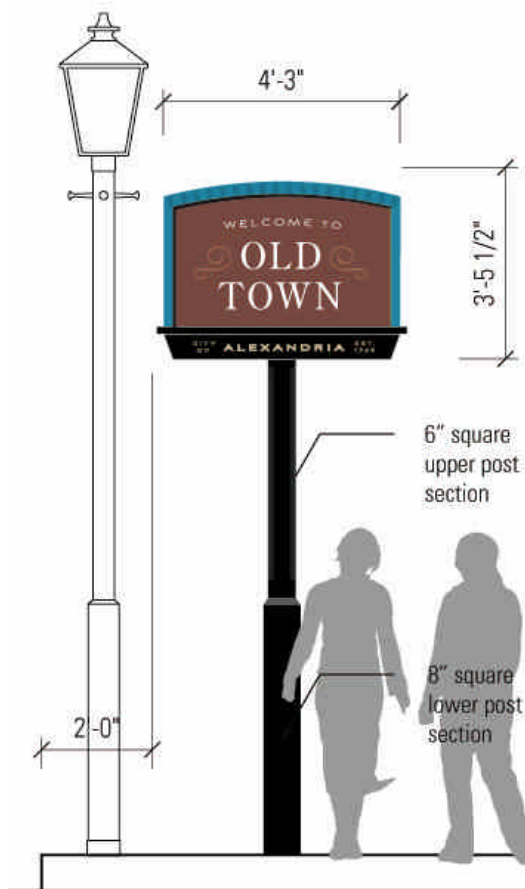*A few more questions we'd like your guidance on:*

*District Markers*

*Quantity/Placement of pedestrian mini-kiosks*

*Guidelines regarding A-frames*

*Incorporation of QR code and web information on signs*

CITY OF | A L E X A N D R I A
WAYFINDING DESIGN

DISTRICTS



4'-3"

3'-5 1/2"

6" square upper post section

8" square lower post section

2'-0"

WELCOME TO
OLD TOWN

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

EISENHOWER VALLEY
→ Eisenhower Ave.
→ Cameron Run Regional Park
→ M Van Dorn St.
→ Animal Shelter

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

*Vehicular directional sign showing the Eisenhower district header*

OLD TOWN

DEL RAY

CARLYLE

POTOMAC YARD

ARLANDRIA

WEST END

WELCOME TO
OLD TOWN

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

*District Identification sign for Old Town*

WELCOME TO
EISENHOWER VALLEY

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

WELCOME TO
DEL RAY

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

WELCOME TO
CARLYLE

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

WELCOME TO
POTOMAC YARD

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

WELCOME TO
ARLANDRIA

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

WELCOME TO
WEST END

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749

**FEEDBACK we have heard:**

- These signs may or may not be needed in Old Town and may contribute to the clutter.

- Still appropriate for other districts

- Some have noted that the proposed design for their district isn't quite right yet. While the consultant won't be revising these further, design revisions can be submitted based on consensus within the district for approval by the City



ARLANDRIA

POTOMAC YARD

DEL RAY

WEST END

OLD TOWN

EISENHOWER VALLEY

CARLYLE
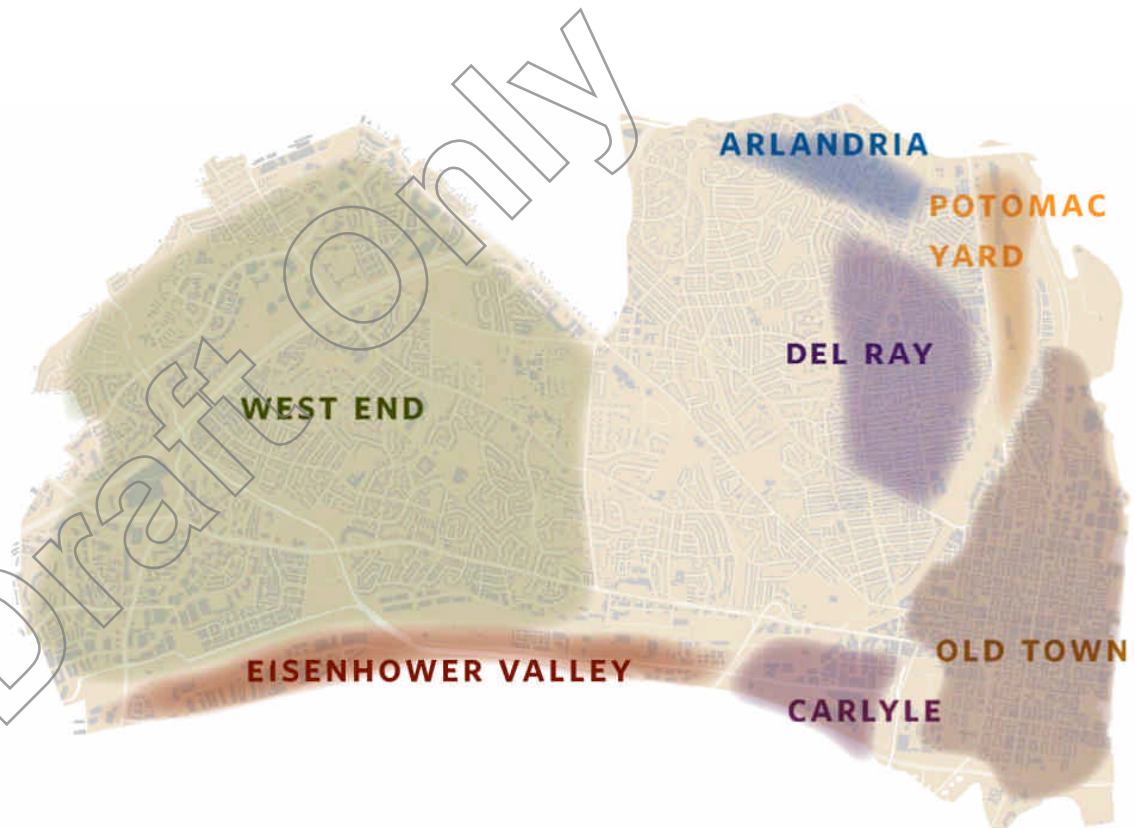
*Districts identified by the Stakeholder Advisory Group, showing*

CITY OF **ALEXANDRIA**
WAYFINDING DESIGN

- Will replace ~55 existing single-sided signs

- Proposed quantity under review. These can be either located at every intersection (2 per) or only on those corners that have historic attractions down the side street, and periodically on those corners that don't, with the goal of reducing the overall quantity from 36 to about 18-20
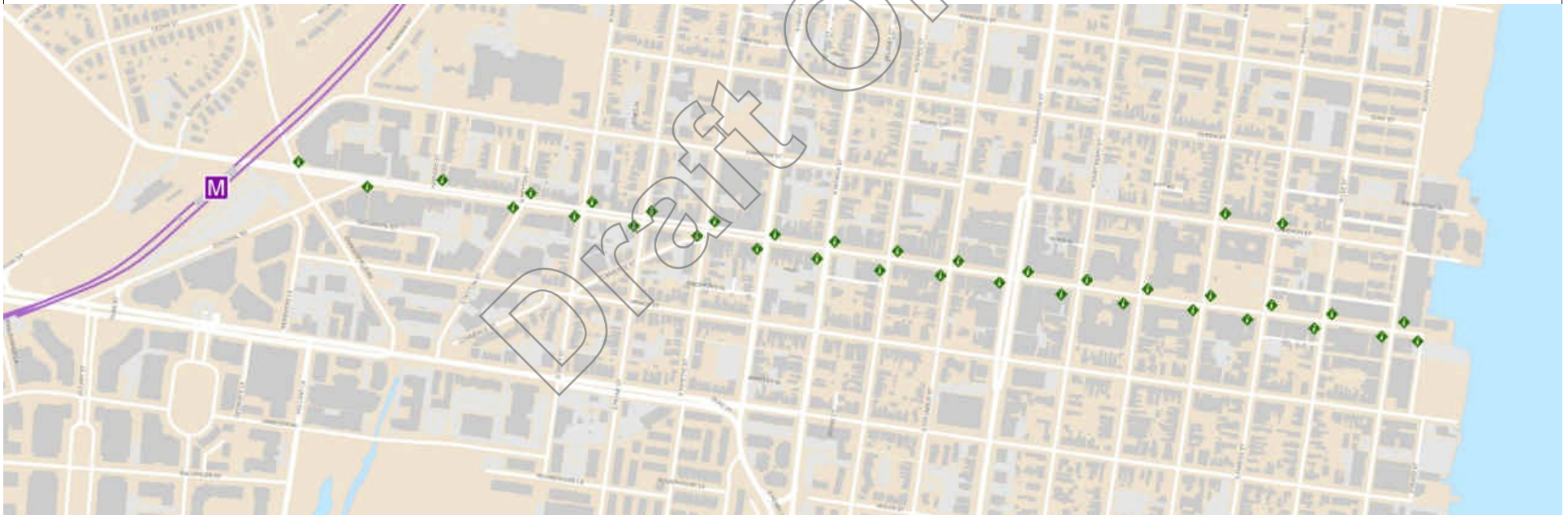
## BACKGROUND:

- Participants in current pilot program attribute significant increase in business and foot traffic to the improved visibility from the A-frames program

- Community feedback: Build on success of pilot program with a more secure & refined design standard

## OBJECTIVE:

- Establish required standards for design, fabrication and installation to ensure coordination with wayfinding program and safety for pedestrians

- Provide an opportunity for increased visibility of shopping/dining on side streets

- Allow businesses to work together on management and maintenance of the shared signs

An example of how a URL and code could be integrated into the sign – unique to each sign

The Office of Communications would like to investigate/recommend adding an online component to the wayfinding program to provide for information and functionality beyond the limits of static signage.  An online layer could provide features such as:

• Background and reference information that wouldn't fit on a sign

• Links to ACVA information, features, promotions

• Location-specific information about the attractions, amenities, and events in the vicinity

• Interactive maps including points of interest, walking/driving directions

• Links to audio and video programs

• Social networking features

• The sign should include at least a text URL, but the addition of an enhanced barcode would also enable mobile device users to enter the URL without having to type a long string of characters.

•The key to adding an online component is the integration of a web address into each sign -- preferably one that is unique to the sign

# FINAL DISCUSSION

SAG Comments

- On mock-ups

- On proposed revisions

- On additional questions

Public Comments

- On mock-ups

- On proposed revisions

- On additional questions

Final Comments From SAG Members

- Are you supportive of the overall program

- Is the program consistent with the objectives established by the SAG

- Are there aspects of the program that you do not support, and why?

Public Comment

CITY OF

ALEXANDRIA
WAYFINDING DESIGN

# NEXT STEPS

- Summer 2010 - Staff will respond to and document input on the program/mockups

- Summer 2010 - End of public review of draft manual; revisions/refinements

- September 2010 – Design Guidelines Manual (DGM) docketed for Planning Commission

- Once the DGM is approved, City will implement Phase 1 - parking garage ID signs in Old Town with funding in City Council's FY2011 budget

- Subsequent phases implemented as funding is allocated

CITY OF | ALEXANDRIA
WAYFINDING DESIGN

9 July 2010